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98-645N

MAR 2 1999

Mr. Mark Bogomolny
Landmark Products Corporation
Suite C
26351 Curtiss Wright Parkway
Richmond Heights, Ohio 44143

Dear Mr. Bogomolny:

The White House recently asked us to respond to your July 13, 1998, electronic mail. --- message about food safety. We apologize for the delay in a response.

The Food Safety and Inspection Service (**FSIS**) of the Department of Agriculture (USDA) is responsible for ensuring that meat, poultry, and egg products are safe, wholesome, and accurately labeled. **FSIS** enforces the Federal Meat Inspection Act, the Poultry Products Inspection Act, and the Egg Products Inspection Act, which require Federal inspection and **regulation of** meat, poultry, and egg products prepared for distribution in commerce for use as human food. The Food and Drug Administration (**FDA**) of the Department of Health and Human Services has jurisdiction over foods other than meat, poultry, and egg products.

It is not clear from your electronic mail message whether you market your products to the meat, poultry, and egg products industries. If you do, you maybe aware of our ongoing efforts to improve the safety of those products. In July 1996, we published new pathogen reduction requirements for all meat and poultry plants to improve food safety and modernize the inspection system by directly targeting and preventing contamination with harmful bacteria and other food safety hazards. Under the new regulations, slaughter and processing establishments must have systems of process control to prevent food safety hazards, known as Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (**HACCP**). The HACCP approach is a system of process control that is widely recognized by scientific authorities and in international organizations and is used extensively in the food industry to meet health safety requirements. Under HACCP, owners and operators of federally inspected meat and poultry plants are expected to take more responsibility for their processing operations their HACCP plans, plant owners and operators will have to evaluate each step in their processes to determine what hazards may affect their products. They will also be required to show that they are meeting standards for reducing pathogens, the bacteria that can cause illness when food is mishandled. Slaughter plants must follow established operating procedures for sanitation and must conduct microbial testing for generic *E. coli*, to verify that their process control systems are working as intended to prevent fecal contamination, the primary avenue of contamination for harmful bacteria. FSIS is conducting *Salmonella* testing in slaughter plants and establishments that produce raw ground meat and poultry to ensure that plants are meeting performance standards for pathogen reduction. We expect this combination of process controls, microbial testing, and pathogen reduction standards to significantly reduce contamination of meat and poultry with **harmful** bacteria and reduce the risk of food borne illness.

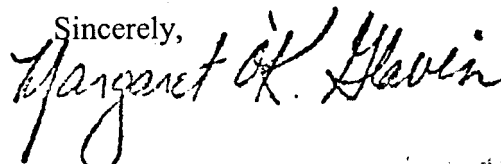
Our new system also includes measures for addressing hazards that arise during production, transportation, distribution, and retail sale. We believe this "farm-to-table" approach targets the important hazards and builds the public health principle of prevention into every meat and poultry production process.

Regarding food safety in other areas, operations conducted at restaurants, retail stores, and related food services are exempt from continuous inspection requirements of FMIA and PPIA. We rely on State and local health authorities to monitor sanitary conditions in the hundreds of thousands of retail markets, restaurants, and related food services throughout the country. However, FSIS officials have been working with the FDA and State and local officials to adopt and implement a standard Food Code to ensure consistent sanitation and food handling practices among food preparers. We officials also are working with the National Restaurant Association and USDA's Extension Service to incorporate food safety education in training programs for food handlers.

We agree with your remarks about the importance of increase public awareness of food safety issues. Because it is not always possible to detect the presence of pathogens in meat and poultry products, we have made consumer education a key component of USDA's pathogen reduction strategy to reduce or eliminate *E.coli* 0157:H7 and other food-borne pathogens. "Scientific studies show that food-borne illness can often be prevented by proper food handling. Recent studies also indicate that many food preparers lack basic food safety information and skills, particularly with regard to the relationship between food temperatures and food-borne illness. We conduct an extensive education program to inform consumers of meat and poultry products about safe handling and preparation practices to avoid food-borne illness sometimes associated with these products.

With regard to your concerns about the President's Food Safety Initiative, you maybe aware that several government agencies are cooperating in this effort. One of the objectives of the Food Safety Initiative is to make food safety information more readily available to the public. To help meet this objective, a new website has been added to the Internet at www.foodsafety.gov. The site is a gateway to government food safety information and provides information on the roles and contributions of each of the agencies.

We appreciate having your comments and hope you find this information useful. Thank you for writing.

Sincerely,


Thomas J. Billy
Administrator

cc: Ms. Sue Smith
Director, Office of Agency Liaison
Executive Office of the President
Room 6, OEOB
Washington, D.C. 20500

FSIS:FSEMCS:KathyBrown:720-8973:03/01/99:Bogomol.wpd:
2005734/04-4082894

Information: standard language

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AGLIAS/USDA
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE
SECRETARIAT, USDA
1998 AUG -5 P 2: 53

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From: lmproducts@stratos.net Mon Jul 13 12:01:44 1998
Date: Mon, 13 Jul 1998 12:00:31 +0000
From: Mark Bogomolny <lmproducts@stratos.net>
Subject: Food Safety
To: president@WhiteHouse.GOV
Cc: senator_glenn@glenn.senate.gov
Reply-to: lmproducts@stratos.net
Message-id: <01IZCNJOGKWI000POH@STORM.EOP.GOV>

COPIES: _____



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Content-transfer-encoding: 7BIT

Priority: normal

Comments: This message scanned by SCAN version 0.1 jms/960226

For the past 8 years, my company has been developing, manufacturing, and selling low tech food safety devices to the food service industry. As I continue to hear and read about your push towards a safer food supply, I look at my experience in the industry, and selling to this industry, and see that there are some major areas of food safety that should also be addressed.

Obviously, the safer the ingredients are at the beginning, the better chance of having safe food, but that eliminates one of the biggest problems in food safety - people.

Most of the companies that we deal with are constantly under pressure to hire. Consequently, they hire what is available, and not necessarily what is best for the company. We constantly hear customers tell us that our products are good, but "if we can't get our people to put a hot and pepper in the right containers, how are we going to get them to use your products"?

Secondly, a tremendous effort is being made to increase the awareness of food safety. What we find is that the general public is more interested in food safety than much of the industry. Food safety is an expense to the industry, therefore, people are reluctant to spend money on food safety issues and products because they don't get any return from it. We see this issue as we try to sell our products to the very small ma-and-pa restaurants, to the largest food service companies in the world.

If you are looking for additional input for your food safety initiative, and would like the viewpoint of a small businessman's perspective, I could be eager to help.

I can be contacted at:

Landmark Products Corp.
26351 CIMisswright Parkway
Suite C
Richmond Heights, OH 44143

Phone 216732-3770 or 800-229-8099
Fax -216-732-3775

Thank you for your time.

Mark **Bogomolny**
Chairman
Landmark Products Crop,

SA

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7/11/99

Final

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Mr. Mark Bogomolny
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26351 Curtiss Wright Parkway
Richmond Heights, Ohio 44143

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Thomas J. Billy

Administrator

cc: The White House

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information: standard language